



NEWS RELEASE

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Health Advisory – Air Pollution People with Heart and Lung Disease Warned to Stay Inside

“People with heart or lung disease, such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma, the elderly, children and pregnant women should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion and limit time spent outdoors due to high levels of air pollution from fires,” said Scott E. Holmes, Environmental Public Health Manager, with the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. “Smoke from fires is being carried into the Lincoln area by southerly winds. Smoke is made up of tiny particles and gases which, when breathed into the lungs, can cause asthma attacks, make chronic bronchitis and emphysema worse, and cause angina in some people with heart disease.”

The air in Lincoln has been classified as UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE INDIVIDUALS according to the Environmental Protection Agency’s Air Quality Index due to the levels of particle air pollution from smoke. Keeping windows and doors closed in your home can give some protection from smoke. If you must drive somewhere, turn the car air conditioner to the “re-circulate” setting.

If people with lung or heart disease have symptoms worsened by smoke exposure, they should consult their health care provider immediately. These symptoms include repeated coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, wheezing, tightness or pain in the chest, palpitations, nausea, unusual fatigue or feeling light headed.

Other tips to protect your health and reduce your exposure to smoke :

- avoid using exhaust fans (kitchen, bathroom, clothes dryer, etc.)
- do not use whole house fans that draw outside air into your home
- if cooling is needed, turn air conditioning to re-circulate mode in home and car, or use ceiling fans or portable fans
- avoid indoor sources of air pollution, including tobacco smoke, frying or broiling foods, burning candles, vacuuming, and using paints, solvents, cleaning products and adhesives

- keep a several days supply of medication available

The Health Department monitors air quality 24 hours a day for Carbon Monoxide, Ozone, and PM2.5 (fine particles). The Air Quality Index for Lincoln is updated daily and can be found by going to the City of Lincoln's web site: lincoln.ne.gov and using the keyword "air".

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